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ABSTRACT

Profiles are provided for the outstanding adult basic education (ABE) program in each of 10 regions. Each profile provides a brief background; discusses the program's focus(es); describes program activities, operation, and components; presents some figures on the population served; and provides the name, address, and telephone number of a contact person. These programs are included: Nashua (New Hampshire) Adult Learning Center ABE Program; Fair Law (New Jersey) ABE Program for the Deaf; Fairfax (Virginia) Adult Integrated Network (FAIN); ABE, Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute, Hudson, North Carolina; ABE--Lawrence Adult Center, Springfield, Illinois; Dona Ana Branch Community College--ABE, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico; Alliance, Nebraska ABE; Billings (Montana) Adult Education Center; Rio Salado ABE, Rio Salado Community College, Phoenix, Arizona; and Sitka (Alaska) Basic Education Program. (YLB)

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Office of Vocational and Adult Education

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC

1985

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION I

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Nashua Adult Learning Center Adult Basic Education Program"

Nashua, New Hampshire

The Nashua Adult Learning Center was founded in 1972 to provide educational services to low-income and under-educated residents of the Greater Nashua Area, and day care for their children. In its first year of operations, the Center served a total of about 80 students in the curriculum areas of Adult Basic Education (ABE), preparation for a General Education Diploma (GED), and English as a Second Language (ESL).

In the 1983-84 year, the Center served 1,600 clients in a broad variety of programs. Although ABE, GED, and ESL remain at the core of the curriculum, the Center has expanded and now includes such areas as an alternative high school, career counseling, and vocational training.

Extensive planning and coordination with community agencies, businesses, and industry help form a referral network to reach those who need the services and, later, to reach those who need qualified employees. Information on course offerings is sent to a mailing list of about 250 agencies, schools, and churches; the Chamer of Commerce disseminates information to about 600 of its members, and the local media assist in publicizing the information. The community and the private sector

have contributed funds, materials, and equipment, including computer equipment, for the Center's program.

The Center reaches out to those who are the most isolated in the community, and they get a sense of belonging by attending classes. The experience also helps them overcome their sense of alienation and powerlessness. As their self-esteem increases and as they master skills, other opportunities for training become available. Thus, the overall result is better jobs, economic self-sufficiency, and an improved quality of life.

# # #

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION II

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Fair Lawn Adult Basic Education Program for the Deaf"

Fair Lawn Community School

Fair Lawn, New Jersey

The Fair Lawn Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program for the Deaf, established in 1978, was the first free literacy program for the deaf in New Jersey. This highly individualized ABE program serves 60-80 adults annually, with a retention rate of about 70 percent.

The main focus of the program is on reading and language skills development, but mathematics is another option for students who request it. The Life Coping Skills segment of the program, based on the University of Texas Adult Performance Level (APL) concept, is offered as a teacher led group discussion session which includes information gathering, problem solving, and confidence building.

Most students in the program show a one-year reading improvement according to pre- and post-testing. A student development survey was used to find out how well needs were being met. More than 80 percent of the adults indicated that they came to the ABE program to improve their skills in reading, writing, and vocabulary as well as to meet other deaf persons.

More than 70 percent of the students indicated that their improved skills had carried over into other areas of their lives in such activities as helping children with homework, reading captions on their TV decoders, reading at home, and understanding written communication on the job.

In 1980, when the Fair Lawn ABE program was in its third year of operation, it developed for the New Jersey Bureau of Adult Continuing and Community Education a manual entitled, "ABE for the Deaf." This was an operational tool which described curriculum, philosophy, and strategies for establishing and managing ABE programs for the deaf anywhere in the State or elsewhere. By the end of 1982, the New Jersey's deaf population of about 13,000 had access to literacy programs similar to Fair Lawn's.

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION III

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Fairfax Adult Integrated Network (FAIN)"

Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia

The Fairfax Adult Integrated Network (FAIN), in operation for 20 years, provides a range of basic education programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners in Fairfax County.

The program has multiple entry and exit points to serve adults of different learning abilities, styles, achievement, and needs, thus enabling each to leave the program after having reached his or her learning goals. FAIN includes Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and a Volunteer Learning Program (VLP). It also includes credentialing options such as the External Diploma Program (EDP) and General Educational Development (GED). Each year, FAIN serves approximately 8,000 students between the ages of 16 and 82.

In an attempt to provide flexibility in location, FAIN offers instructional sites throughout the County. Learning opportunities are based in such places as schools, community centers, libraries, and work places, and at home. There are also special needs centers including those for emotionally disturbed adults, senior citizens, and those who are incarcerated.

An integral part of FAIN is coordination with community agencies and local businesses and industries. Representatives are involved in the planning and evaluation of FAIN through an advisory council and a planning committee. Therefore, referrals are also made from many agencies. Another input from the community is that of local universities both in the development of training seminars in specific areas for teachers and in the training of university students through observations of teaching methods and techniques of the ABE and ESL teachers.

During 1984, adult basic education learning centers served 979 persons, and 376 classes in English as a second language served 6,736. The volunteer learning program trained 52 tutors and served 146 clients.

In addition to mastering skills, there is much evidence that FAIN helps improve the self-confidence of students. A few examples follow:

A 42-year old single parent with three teenage children needed a high school diploma which was a requirement for enrolling in a hotel and restaurant school. Later, she said, "EDP made me feel a whole lot better about myself." Also inspired by her mother's motivation, the 17-year-old daughter made the honor roll in her high school for the first time.

An 82-year old learner who passed the GED test talked of her plan to begin college and, on the evening of her graduation, her great-great granddaughter signed up at a learning center to earn her GED.

A group of elderly immigrants were having difficulty being assimilated into a retirement home until an ESL class was organized to teach them how to answer the intercom, how to respond to a fire drill and to read and understand signs such as "Emergency Exit Only," "Danger," and "Door Locked at 9:00 p.m."

Students themselves often volunteer many hours of time to assist with the ESL program. Volunteers work in the office, assist teachers in the classroom, and tutor students who cannot attend classes; they also promote the program in the community and in organizations.

Of those enrolled in ABE and ESL programs, 273 students obtained jobs and 80 others were promoted. Six families were removed from public assistance, and 134 entered other training classes.

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION IV

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Adult Basic Education"

Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute

Hudson, North Carolina

The Adult Basic Education (ABE) program at Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute, in operation for 19 years, now has 51 class sites in its two-county service area. About one-fourth of the classes are held at business and industry sites, and plant personnel identify, recruit, and actively support students. They also publicize student successes in their newsletters and follow up on student drop-outs. Other sites for classes include community buildings, hospitals, and public schools.

A part-time recruiter keeps information about the ABE program in the media continually. During 1983-84, 65 recruiting drives were conducted including recruitment at a soup kitchen. Students are evaluated in reading and math on entry, and materials are chosen on the basis of each student's skill level. Each student then proceeds through his or her course of study at a pace that is comfortable. Recruitment of ABE students is at two levels: Level I -- grades 0-4, and Level II -- grades 5-8. Volunteer tutors are used, especially with the Level I students.

From July 1, 1984 to June 30, 1985, a total of 1,260 ABE students were served. Each year, one-third of the students enrolled complete the program. After students have completed both Levels I and II, a follow-up is made to see whether they have entered another educational program.

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION V

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Adult Basic Education -- Lawrence Adult Center"

Springfield School District #186

Springfield, Illinois

The Lawrence Adult Education Program, administered by Springfield School District #186, began in 1977. Since its inception, the program has actively sought and received cooperation from community agencies, business, and industry on two levels -- curriculum planning and financial and voluntary services.

The program operates on an open entry/open exit sequential individualized curriculum with student needs and goals as the basic criteria for developing an individualized Educational Plan for each student. The reading levels of students in the program varies from non-reader to the 12th grade. In addition to basic skills in such subjects as reading, math, and science, the program now includes life skills and vocational skills in such areas as nutrition and child development, food service training, and driver education.

In order to make the program more readily available to all segments of the community, a number of support services are in place. For example, the program provides transportation to and from school; child care facilities in the centers, and recruitment and retention of workers.

The program serves 1,300-1,500 each year. During the past year, more than 300 persons received their General Education Development (GED) diplomas. The most recent component to be added to the program is that of a one-to-one volunteer tutoring program to increase literacy of those students described as functionally illiterate. A number of the functionally illiterate, who are on the way to becoming literate, are giving testimony to the helpfulness of the program and offer much incentive for others to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the program.

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION VI

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Dona Ana Branch Community College-Adult Basic Education"

New Mexico State University

Las Cruces, New Mexico

The Dona Ana Branch Community College-Adult Basic Education program, in operation for 10 years, serves as a model program for New Mexico. Serving a 75-mile radius, it coordinates activities with public state agencies, school districts, and other agencies. Adult basic education and other coordinated education activities are offered at military bases and at community centers, including those for senior citizens.

English as a Second Language (ESL) and classes in citizenship form a large part of the total program. Recently, a volunteer literacy program was started which has already trained approximately 100 volunteers for one-to-one tutoring, and a literacy council has been formed.

During 1983-84, students participated in the Dona Ana program, 80 percent of whom were minorities. A large proportion of the students are also applicants for the one-year certificate program in the trades or retailing. Some economic advantages of

the program were reflected in the fact that, during 1983-84, 213 adult learners found employment, and 336 others were promoted. This helped to make possible the removal of 379 from public assistance. Also, 209 entered a one-,two-, or four-year post-secondary program, and 68 entered military service. Other benefits not so easily measured were those such as more involvement of parents with their children's education and improved quality of life.

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION VII

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Alliance Nebraska Adult Basic Education"

Alliance City Schools, Nebraska

The Adult Basic (ABE) program in Alliance has been in operation since 1969. It has served more than 2,000 students and has aided 920 in the completion of high school requirements. In addition to the program offered at adult centers, there is a program for the incarcerated, and a homebound program for those unable to attend formal classes. The program draws heavily upon volunteers who continue to serve over a long period of time and who also help in recruiting other volunteers. Some 40 volunteers contribute an average of 300 hours each month. Community agencies, businesses, and industry are also much involved in the program, particularly in its planning and coordination.

To date, the Alliance program has served more than 2,000 students and has aided 920 in the completion of high school requirements. Upon entry into the program, each student is tested, and each student is evaluated by the instructor as to goals and abilities. Appropriate curriculum materials are then chosen for each student.

In the 1984-85 year, 148 were enrolled -- 35 at Grade 0-4 level; 98 at Grade 5-8 level, and 15 beyond Grade 8. Of these, 46 had obtained jobs, and one had received a raise in pay.

The program has five major components; (1) Adult Basic Education (ABE); (2) English as a Second Language (ESL); (3) high school completion for those with less than a high school diploma; (4) living skills for adults who wish to improve their basic life skills; and (5) citizenship classes.

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION VIII

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Billings Adult Education Center"

Billings Public Schools, Montana

The Billings Adult Education Center, in operation for 20 years, has an open entry/open exit system, and schedules for classes are flexible. Students may enroll for a full or partial day and for one or several days a week. Also, students participate in scheduling the number of classes and areas of study, and they are involved in the plan of study within the classrooms. Students range in age from 16 to 75, and their entry levels range from nonreader to Grade 12 or above.

The entire program is focused on the students, and the main objective of the Center is to enable adults to upgrade basic skills in order that they may be able to make a positive influence upon themselves, their families, and society. Therefore, student involvement is encouraged. Among the activities which students have organized and in which they participated are: a student talent presentation; annual cleanup days; and school potlucks, assemblies, and holiday celebrations.

Students often help each other with daily assignments and work. All of the instructional aides were once students in the programs, and student volunteers help in classrooms on a regular basis. Their involvement in citizenship responsibilities sometimes lead them to write letters to legislators.

Feedback from students was obtained through three formal evaluations: Evaluation of Adult Basic Education Participation Outcome (1983), Adult Basic Education Local Project Evaluation (1981) and Adult Education Center Five Year Follow-up (1976). Samples of students' comments from these evaluations follow:

"The Adult Learning Center has been the roots to my goals to complete my education."

"You have helped me so much by helping me get my GED and also by helping me gain confidence in myself. I am doing great at Vo-Tech and am enjoying it."

"You all gave me a new start in life. You made me believe in myself again. You couldn't do better than that and I thank you."

"I learned a great deal about myself and other people. It built up my confidence and my determination to make something out of myself. Within the past two months I finally got the job I wanted."

Each year, the Center's program serves more than 1,000 persons. This service is made possible largely because of the great community support in Billings.

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION IX

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Rio Salado Adult Basic Education"

Rio Salado Community College

Phoenix, Arizona

The Rio Salado Adult Basic Education program, in operation for six years, provides four types of classes: (1) Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), English as a Second Language (ESL), and Citizenship Training (CIT).

During 1983-84, basic education classes were provided for 2,800 students in 30 locations, and, during 1984-85, 3,414 students were served. The program provides services to a multi-level and multi-language group of students, some of whom are educationally disadvantaged.

During the past year, the Arizona Department of Education made awards for six special demonstration and staff development projects: (1) Computer-Assisted in Basic Skills and GED instruction; (2) Basic Skills and GED instruction by audio-teleconferencing; (3) "Sing and Learn English," an ESL curriculum project developing cassettes with contemporary tunes to increase vocabulary and grammar skills; (4) statewide student

newsletter; (5) statewide staff development project; and (6) an ABE network which includes a statewide ABE staff directory and newsletter.

An integral part of the program is the volunteer component. Volunteers who participate in the program come from many walks of life including stock brokers, community college students, and retired teachers.

An underlying philosophy of the program is that "no program is an island unto itself" and that shared knowledge and experience breeds increased knowledge and effectiveness.

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SECRETARY'S AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ADULT

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

REGION X

PROFILE OF AWARD WINNER

"Sitka Adult Basic Education Program"

Islands Community College

Sitka, Alaska

The Sitka Adult Basic Education (ABE) program, established in 1977, also includes General Education Development (GED) testing, English as a Second Language (ESL) and life skills instruction conducted in community workshops. The program serves about 280 each year.

The curriculum stresses matching the materials to the specific deficiencies and learning goals of the students and providing a variety of methods for presentation. Programmed instruction, videotapes and computer-assisted-instruction are among the variety of materials used.

Community agencies provide the Sitka ABE program with planning ideas, class space and educational materials, and resource persons for special programs. In turn, the ABE program provides diagnostic testing, counseling, and remedial tutoring for clients, and special classes designed to meet the needs of both the students and the agencies.

On-going planning activities include meetings of the Adult Education Advisory Council, interviews with eighteen referring agencies, participation in community meetings, and teacher and student input.

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